

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) Vacuum heat insulating material comprising a core material containing inorganic fibers and an exterior covering material having gas barrier performance, the vacuum heat insulating material being provided by depressurizing interior of the exterior covering material, wherein:

the inorganic fibers include silicon oxide as a main component; ~~and~~

~~the core material has intersecting points at which the fibers are adhered to one another via intermolecular interaction~~

Si-OH/Si-O ratio of a surface of the inorganic fibers is equal to or higher than 0.1 and equal to or lower than 1.0; and

the core material is a formed body of the inorganic fibers provided by adhesion of the inorganic fibers to one another by an intermolecular interaction of Si-OH groups existing at the surface of the inorganic fibers.

2. (Currently Amended) The vacuum heat insulating material according to claim 1, wherein the intermolecular interaction is Si-OH group hydrogen bonding at ~~a~~ the surface of the inorganic fibers.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The vacuum heat insulating material according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the core material has a density equal to or higher than 150kg/m³ and equal to or lower than 300kg/m³.

5. (Currently Amended) The vacuum heat insulating material according to ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the core material has bending strength equal to or higher than 0.03 MPa and equal to or lower than 0.10 MPa.

6. (Currently Amended) The vacuum heat insulating material according to claim 3 1, wherein Si-OH groups are introduced to the surface of the fibers by contact between the surface of the fibers and water molecules.

7. (Currently Amended) A refrigeration equipment having a refrigerating box at least including a vacuum heat insulating material, wherein:

the vacuum heat insulating material comprises a core material containing inorganic fibers and an exterior covering material having gas barrier performance in which interior of the exterior covering material is depressurized,

the inorganic fibers include silicon oxide as a main component, ~~and~~
~~intersecting points at which the fibers are adhered each other by~~
~~intermolecular interaction are formed~~ ;

Si-OH/Si-O ratio of a surface of the inorganic fibers is equal to or higher than 0.1 and equal to or lower than 1.0; and

the core material is a formed body of the inorganic fibers provided by adhesion of the inorganic fibers to one another by an intermolecular interaction of Si-OH groups existing at the surface of the inorganic fibers.

8. (Original) The refrigeration equipment according to claim 7, wherein the refrigeration equipment is a refrigerator/freezer that uses the vacuum heat insulating material at least for heat insulation of a freezing compartment.

9. (Currently Amended) The refrigeration equipment according to claim 7, wherein the intermolecular interaction is Si-OH group hydrogen bonding existing at a the surface of the fibers.

10. (Cancelled)